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ABSTRACT

This collection of materials is designed to assist those who work with early adolescents in a variety of educational settings. The articles address the following areas of concern: (1) student-teacher relationships; (2) physical growth and development; (3) adolescent needs in terms of self, family, peers, and society; and (4) nutritional patterns and their impact on pregnant teenagers. (HLM)

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Early Adolescents

Understanding and Nurturing Their Development

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Photo by John Lidstone

Introduction

"They're growing up too fast!" we shake our heads and mutter, as our ten- to fourteen-year-olds seem to be racing headlong, not merely jogging, into adolescence. Parents and professionals know that there *is* something different about today's early adolescents and are searching to understand what it is.

With this publication, the Association for Childhood Education International urgently underscores the importance of understanding and nurturing that developmental stage known variously as early adolescence, preadolescence or transescence. Labeled by whatever term, it is a period of important growth, not a mere raceway to adolescence. Those who live and work with young people must recall their own early adolescence; understand the biological, cognitive, social and psychic changes occurring; and help children to accept themselves during this period.

Our contributors have created a collage of information regarding the nature and needs of the early adolescent. The publication was designed to be selective, not comprehensive, with articles chosen from the pages of CHILDHOOD EDUCATION by members of the Association's Early Adolescence Committee. Those seeking to increase their understanding and improve their relationships with early adolescents will find here a framework of useful topics.

Do you remember what your own early adolescence was like? *Lois Barclay Murphy* reminds us of the "Forgotten Years." And she helps us recall our teachers: "the mean top sergeants" as well as those who could understand and communicate effectively with us.

Donald McNassor writes with uncommon sensitivity about the insecurities and needs of the early adolescent. He describes the special qualities and capabilities of the good junior high or middle school teacher who recognizes that, for these children, education is a "process of helping people who have given up the certainties of childhood to explore uncertainties of all kinds in order to learn how to deal with life's incongruities." The relationship between these unique teachers and their students is one that fosters journeys into the adult world.

Ron Tyrrell, Frank Johns and *Fred Hanoch McCarty* pick up on the physical aspects of the difficult transition from childhood to adolescence. The authors provide a clear overview of the rapid biological metamorphosis, while explaining that adults have what preadolescents need—understanding, patience and stability. Alternatives are suggested for those hurdles that teachers sometimes unknowingly set up before preadolescents—avoiding sensitive discussions, restricting needed physical activity and forgetting to provide for the enormous physical variations among students.

Gertrude M. Lewis contributes the voices of emerging adolescents asking about their own bodies, self-understanding, friendships, family relationships and social issues: questions children yearn to ask of and have answered by honest and knowledgeable adults. The voices direct us to make today's curricula more appropriate to their needs.

Fritz Redl reinforces McNassor's counsel regarding adult-child relationships. His article (first written in 1943!) bears repeating today for the new parade of adults trying to understand and live at peace with ten- to fourteen-year-olds. With Redl's help, the reader can step back and look more objectively at these early adolescents; then apply five guidelines for promoting the survival of both adults and children, while spurring their emotional and social development.

Essie E. Lee warns us that the food choices, nutritional patterns and early pregnancies of teenage mothers put them and their unborn children at risk. By implication, her warning is for preadolescents too. The pregnancy rate is increasing fastest among ten- to fourteen-year-olds! Citing the unique problems of the poor, Lee urges us to find out what's happening in our own communities. She catalogs reasons for poor food habits, each one pointing to possible preventive measures. In addition, she highlights six ways that teachers, parents and other concerned adults can help to change the distressing trends.

Stephen M. Corey concludes our story as the voice of the "Poor Scholar" whose seventh-grade curriculum is not meeting his needs. Are we listening?

On behalf of the Early Adolescence Committee, warm thanks to Bonnie Baron, ACEI Associate Editor for Special Publications (1976-1978), and her editorial colleagues for their dedicated help in preparing this publication.—**JOHN R. BURTON,** *Bulletin Coordinator and ACEI Vice-President Representing Early Adolescence; Assistant Principal, Viers Mill Elementary School, Silver Spring, Maryland.*

Enjoying Preadolescence: The Forgotten Years

Lois Barclay Murphy

BETWEEN THE AGES OF ten and thirteen or fourteen, typically, the child goes through almost as great a transformation as that seen when a tadpole changes into a frog. Moreover, longitudinal studies have shown how the changes follow differing patterns in different children: chubby Elise becomes tall and willowy; slender John becomes muscular and strong; Constance, who had always been one of the big children in her class, finds others spurting ahead, continuing to gain in height while she completes her growth at twelve; skinny Kathie rounds out as enlarging breasts reveal her blossoming femininity. Meantime, her best friend, maturing more slowly, remains sadly flat chested until much later. Jim worries because his "dong" is so little, while Jack is amazed that his is so big. In all these children rapid changes bring some degree of narcissistic threat, fear of inadequate appearance or capacity to maintain their own sex-role adequately.

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These seemingly unpredictable changes are accompanied by other changes in inner functions—hormone input and balance, heart rate, autonomic lability, emotional reactivity and energy level. Some children become more energetic, while others become "lazy," "not themselves." Some become irritable, "impossible to live with," while others withdraw and are "hard to reach."

Adults, impressed by the child's growth-spurt, often forget that the external changes may bring a sense of bewilderment, insecurity or even unreality to the child, who is wondering what she will be like or how tall he will get and whether he can compete with other teenagers. Will he be good at sports, which he sees as crucial to teenage status; will she be "popular"?

Along with the unsettling effects of a changing body-image that may be "hard to get used to," many a twelve-year-old feels more than doubtful about the desirability of getting to be thirteen years old. Twelve years old is the last year of childhood. "All along till now my parents have done everything for me; soon I'll have to take over." "There will be more responsibilities." "Teenagers have such a bad reputation—I don't want to be one."

And, just at this point of maximum instability of the inner and outer self, the shift to junior high school brings added external threats to many children. "I won't have a home room with just one teacher anymore—there won't be anyone who knows me." "I don't know whether I'll be able to remember to bring the things I need to every class." "My locker will be a long way off and I don't know whether I'll be able to remember where it is." "There will be different children in every class and it will be hard to get to know them." I attended a thirteenth birthday dinner for one boy—a bright, competent, sensitive, slow-growing boy—who cried and couldn't eat his birthday cake. Even when they have been prepared, some girls are disturbed by their first menstruations and the discomfort sometimes brought.

No wonder teachers often comment that eighth grade is the hardest to teach! With so much inner and outer pressure, self-controls apparently well-established at

This stirring editorial overview calls for a fresh look at the in-between years of ten to fourteen and their distinctive problems and pleasures.
At the time of writing, Lois Barclay Murphy was Director, Developmental Studies, Research Department, Menninger Foundation, Topeka, Kansas. She is currently a freelance consultant and writer in the fields of child development and early childhood education.

nine or ten years of age break down; children are impulsive, emotional; they seem to over-react, to take out their anger on the teacher, to upset each other. Some teachers, forgetting what this phase was like and forgetting whatever child development training they had, retaliate punitively, even sadistically. All across the country I have been given illustrations of "mean" top sergeant techniques for "disciplining" the difficult child who may himself feel bewildered at his restlessness and his impulsiveness, at the difficulty of behaving as well as he formerly did. The children who were not themselves punished may be as angry as the victim at the teacher's "nastiness," such as making a child hold his arms straight up above his head for an hour while standing against the wall.

In contrast to this picture of preadolescent strain, resistance, difficult behavior, we see a happier picture with some children and in some schools. Thirteen-year-old Sam was anxious about his slow development but, unlike another slow-growing boy, he did not take it out in mischievous show-off techniques; his teacher allowed him to apply his math in making detailed blueprints for a boat, which his Shop teacher then helped him to build. Twelve-year-old Sally was precociously adolescent; her "Home Ec" teacher helped her to design and make some teenage clothes and in addition helped her experiment with new hairdoes. In these and many other instances teachers who understand both the new drive pressures, ambitions, hopes and anxieties of children this age can provide constructive outlets for their tensions and help to sustain their confidence and positive self-image.

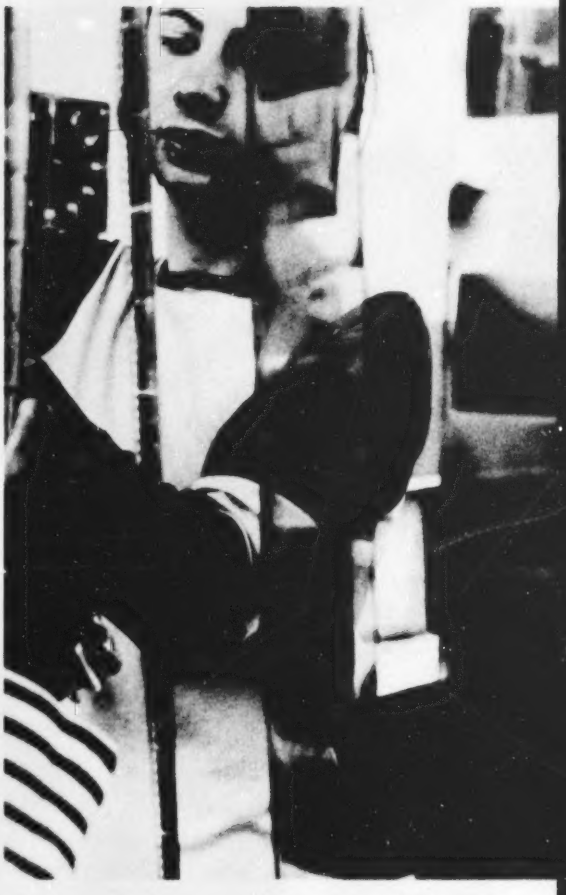
The most successful teachers, as I have seen them, maintain good structure, partly by making demands and providing opportunities which build on the children's interests and which bring achievement that seems worthwhile and thus supports the shaky self-confidence of children this age. These successful teachers are understanding when the children are restless but help them to harness their energies in activities; they don't allow the group experience to become chaotic, but they do not become sadistic in maintaining control because their control is built on the children's own wish for achievement. These teachers avoid boring, repetitious, monotonous assignments at the stage when children find it hard to pay attention to routine tasks; they look for challenging, relevant work that utilizes children's interests.

This requires, of course, the support of curricular flexibility and a school system that is willing to let go of old classics like *Silas Marner* in favor of well-written reports of the moon walk or biographies of heroes of this generation.

Beyond this, the successful teacher is sensitive to the possibility that certain of the "unresponsive" children at this transitional stage may "need time to get used to themselves." Respecting the need for a preadolescent moratorium, while still making interesting opportunities available, is in some cases the wise solution.

The Night World of Preadolescence

Donald McNassor



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YOUNG PEOPLE in the "middle school" time of life enter a night world. Daybreak for them will come several years later during high school after a delicate union of biological maturation and experience. Fundamental biological changes make them very different people than their parents knew as third- and fourth-graders. Overnight, it seems, they have leaped from the more stable physiological and psychological world of childhood into a realm of uncontrolled psychic energy, impulse-flooding, powerful new cognitive capacity, and a stubborn sense of self-determination that often dismays parents and teachers. Middle-school children have acquired a powerful new machine. The drivers are not sure how to manage it. Their world is a night world because this time is when people feel most alone, when they live on the border of reality and unreality, when the shackles to imagination are loosened, and when terror mounts. In the night world the self is absorbed with itself. The practical responsibilities, social obligations and objects of the day world fade away.

The middle-school years mark a new stage in psychological growth. Biological developments have prepared the child for changes in cognitive style, interests and behavior. Mechanisms still a mystery alter the child's psychic competence so that he is able to react to events, tasks and people in new ways. If fundamental biological and psychic changes result in a person radically different from what she/he was just a short time before, it is sensible to conclude that modes of education and interpersonal relationships with adults should be congruent with the needs and problems of the newly acquired energy system. The early adolescent should not be treated like a child of nine, or like an older high school student who has competently integrated biological changes with experience into a more workable unity. The early adolescent requires teaching, counseling and experiences that are not like what is developmentally proper in the elementary school or in the later years in high school. No wonder parenthood is such a worry during these years. Parents can't change gears fast enough.

Middle-school-age youth have long been the center of concern, misunderstanding and frustration for parents and school people alike. How often parents have said or thought, "He has changed so much in one year, it frightens

What are today's middle-school children like? Here is a warm, insightful analysis of the cognitive, psychic and social changes characteristic of their growth.

The late Donald McNassor was Professor and Chairman, Faculty in Education, Claremont Graduate School, Claremont, California.

—VME Smith, Washington, DC

me," or "I don't know how to talk with her anymore," or "He is aloof; I don't know what he's thinking." And how often the unprepared junior high teacher has come to wit's end, yearning to be back with younger children who trust adults and accept their view of the world or with older youth who are more predictable, more in control of their energy system, less brash in asserting their growing power. I have heard it said that the majority of teachers who leave teaching for good are from the junior high schools. Whether or not this assertion is based on fact, it is quite believable.

We have yet to fully appreciate the need for a special kind of teacher in the classrooms of early adolescents. Effective teachers must truly like to be around these children and find them the most interesting if most unpredictable people in the world. The teachers must like them, be intrigued by them, appreciate and find humor in all sorts of absurdities in human behavior. They must not be threatened by the vacillations between infantile and mature acts; they must not mind disorganized personalities. Most of all, they must appreciate the growing cognitive power of these children. The early adolescent is fully competent to function in the adult cognitive styles and tasks of his culture. A teacher who sticks to the syllabus of predetermined subject matter, who cannot generate involvement with ideas and projects that match the new powers of the students, will harvest weeks of boredom and trouble. The good junior high teacher is a special breed, no question about it. The arrangements for learning must convey structure and plan but with ample room for improvisation. It is the lack of the latter where teachers fail.

THE NATURE OF THE NEW COGNITIVE COMPETENCE

The early adolescent, unlike the young child, as Jerome Kagan explains in a very noteworthy article, is not confused by the fact that initial premises violate former notions of what is real.* He is gaining ease in dealing with hypothetical premises that may violate reality. The thirteen-year-old, says Kagan, will accept and think about the problem—"All three-

* Jerome Kagan & Robert Coles (Eds.), *Twelve to Sixteen: Early Adolescence* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1972), pp. 90-106. (In this section of the paper, the author has drawn heavily from Kagan's examples.) Reprinted by permission.

legged snakes are purple; I am hiding a three-legged snake; guess its color." The seven-year-old is confused by data concerning what is real, and he will not cooperate in this problem. He does not appreciate the discontinuity between the self-contained information in the problem and the egocentric information inside him (Kagan, p. 92). The younger child's perceptions of the world and of values are fixed, inflexible, simplistic. The world is in one dimension. Right is right, and wrong is always wrong. The early adolescent, on the other hand, can deal with incongruities. He can think relativistically. In short, he thinks like adults. "To appreciate that problems can be self-contained entities solved by special rules is a magnificent accomplishment that is not usually attained until early adolescence" (Kagan, p. 93).

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Thinking in Multiple Dimensions

Other attributes of the new-found competence include inducing rules from events with multiple and even inconsistent attributes. The adolescent can deal with multiple attributes simultaneously. He is not limited to one-at-a-time kind of analysis. He knows that events have multiple dimensions, that there is always a network of causes to events or behavior. Simplistic explanations that satisfied the child he now regards as silly. He can differentiate between the act and the intention behind it.

Searching for Inconsistencies

One of the fascinating developments that classroom pedagogy often ignores is the desire and the ability of these children to search for what Kagan refers to as inconsistencies in sets of beliefs. The beliefs of human beings and analysis of data depend much on interconnected sets of propositions and beliefs and the discovery and removal of inconsistency. When one major idea in the proposition fails, all of them may be vulnerable. The maturing person not only finds the process of belief-building pleasurable, he actively searches for inconsistencies. Early adolescents endlessly engage in peer conversation for this purpose; and they pounce with glee on the disconnected, inconsistent suppositions of adults.

Younger children regard many things as permanently valid. They think that the world as they perceive it will never change. In the middle years, what was permanently valid has become tentative and suspect. Here is one example, from Kagan's data (p. 94), of this revolutionary development in the child. Consider this complex problem:

1. Parents are omniscient.
2. My parent has lost a job, or doesn't understand me, or has behaved badly.
3. If my parents were omniscient, they would not fail and be vulnerable.

Kagan notes that in dealing with this set of beliefs as a whole, the adolescent eventually works his way through to denial of the first premise and the consequent weakening of the whole set. Consider the implications of the search for inconsistencies for teaching in the social sciences, English, sciences. How bored young adolescents must become with teaching based on thinking about things as permanently valid, or hearing adults under the pretense of consistency advance propositions that can be pulled apart! The boredom is relieved only by the fun of catching teachers making incompatible assertions.

Photos courtesy of Ellen Shockro, Pasadena, CA

New Thoughts . . . Fresh Patterns

I need not develop further this theme of the new cognitive power of junior high students to illustrate how ridiculous middle-school education must seem to students when it is not geared to relativistic thinking, searching for inconsistencies, and questioning and rearranging old beliefs.

Interconnected with biological change components, the hallmark of middle-school behavior is the "rush of new thoughts, their evaluation, and their arrangements in a fresh structure" (Kagan, p. 97). Whether these thoughts conform to the dogmas of parents and teachers is not of primary concern to the preadolescent. Think of junior high education as a process of helping people who have given up the certainties of childhood to explore uncertainties of all kinds in order to learn how to deal with life's incongruities. What a different school this one would be compared with one based on fixed, immutable sets of rules and of subject matter to be assimilated! Nowhere has the idea of teacher as a learning facilitator rather than one who *instructs* greater applicability than in the middle school.

Another consequence of biological changes in sexuality is body awareness, with a good measure of anxiety and guilt, self-consciousness, and at times unrealistic suspicion about the intentions of others. This unpleasant state of affairs produces in some middle-school children either withdrawal signs or their opposite—touchiness, anger, rashness, brashness. Much time may go into silent brooding. Then, failure to get along, to get things done, destroys self-confidence further. Their most pressing need is for adults who like them, help them get things done despite the anarchy within, and aid them in understanding the normative aspects of what is happening to them.

Developing Individual Interests

The rush of new thoughts in middle-school children has been mentioned, new thoughts about self, "I and thou," cause-and-effect in the object world and in human affairs. Imagination, skepticism, questioning formerly held truths, sharply differentiate the early adolescent from younger children These new forces quite naturally are accompanied by a marked rise in individual interests. This is a period when most children explore a new interest so intensely that daily chores or responsibilities are thoroughly neglected. Their need is to find out what they can do well, what they can be really good at. Hobbies of all sorts consume more and more time: how to do something, how to put something together. All sorts of materials are collected. The child's pockets, purses and room at home are a secondhand store of bits and pieces.

The new-found interests, regardless of their inconstancy, should be known and fostered by middle-school teachers in all subjects. A significant part of the curriculum in the middle school should be EXPLORATION. Some individual interests remain active for a short time, then are replaced by new ones. Others will be the kernel of a permanent development, the core of a future identity. Because early adolescents are beginning to think like adults, the pursuit of individual interests should be regarded as an important base for the general expansion of self, not just as something to do in a one-hour-a-week "enrichment" period or as a carrot for those who "get their lessons done."

SEARCHING FOR NEW RELATIONSHIPS

Children who are questioning the beliefs and the structure of the world they came to accept in childhood will actively try on new faces and new ideas with adults who are not parents. The parent no longer is an exclusive model for life. The middle-school child actually seeks a close relationship with a few teachers who will allow him to share and test out tentative ideas, interests and feelings. Being unsure about his responses to everything, however, he does not want total freedom. Anarchy in the classroom cannot be accepted by the middle-school child in his unsettled state. She/he is highly amenable to guidance.

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Teachers as Friends

He thrives on getting acquainted and sharing ideas and activity with teachers who hopefully will be his friends. It is noteworthy that symbolic love affairs develop at this time so easily between students and teachers—boys for both teacher sexes, and likewise girls. The quality and intensity of this love and friendship toward an adult are entirely different in an eight-year-old or in a seventeen-year-old person. Early adolescents will often remember with pleasure, or with a deep resentment, some junior high teachers long after they have only misty memories of their high school teachers. The ones they remember with affection are teachers with whom they became friends at a time when the world came unglued and they found themselves unstuck in time, as in *Slaughterhouse Five*, and when they first engaged in genital manipulation. These teachers were guides during a development storm and were friendly when the student's world was in turmoil. The guides had a sense of humor that made the tempest in a situation seem to be only one in a teapot; they encouraged exploration of ideas and beliefs that were taboo in childhood; they took a very personal interest in a newfound hobby or skill; they took you places outside the classroom, introduced you to new adults and community life formerly closed to you. When you misbehaved grossly they stood firm, unthreatened and reasonable. And occasionally they were able to communicate that they had made fools of themselves.

You came to see them, through their openness, as real people with interests, with homes and children; as people who sleep in beds and have dirty laundry; and as people with lifestyles, political ideas and outside interests different from those of your parents. These fondly remembered teachers were your new cultural heroes. Though they had defect and taint, they were mature enough to permit you to explore and test the adult world of thought and activity in your own hesitant and bumbling way. And somehow they forgave you all of your false starts, for each day and each week were full of false starts and blind alleys.

Other Adults "Outside"

The early adolescent also actively seeks contact with adults outside of school and home. This seeking is a matter of necessity, not just of ordinary interest. As their earlier childhood world of beliefs, of right and wrong, and conceptions of the w[illegible] the world moves begins to crumble, they must reorganize their perceptions without turning into skeptics and weakening self-confidence and the capacity to live well in the world where innocence ends. They have, then, a desire to meet and get into the minds and ways of new adults. They want contact with all kinds of people with varying

backgrounds, work interests and values, thus establishing a further proving ground for bringing seemingly incongruent perceptions of life into a harmonious relationship.

In the long distant past, children had such experiences with adults in the natural course of community life. Now, the school has to be the agent for planned experience with adults outside. To do justice to the need, a twelve- to fourteen-year-old child today should have planned contact and mutual-interest experience with at least as many adults outside of school each year as he has inside.

Mutual Peer Testing

This requirement is not to negate the importance of intimate encounter with peers who hold different beliefs and are experimenting with new skills and identities. The early adolescent needs many friends his age. He needs them to help him shape his beliefs and test their validity. The middle school can provide the student all of this he needs, providing there is a sufficient breadth of activity and range of groupings for different purposes. The totally ungraded middle school with a wide base of exploratory interest activity, beyond some basic core educational activity, can afford the mutual peer interaction required. The mostly graded school, with its overemphasis of subject matter, and its hierarchy of groups based strictly on academic capability, provides the most barren environment for peer encounter and self-evaluation.

THE GENERATION OF EARLY ADOLESCENTS TO COME

If we extrapolate the revolutionary changes in the knowledge, beliefs and values that have occurred in the last twenty years and carefully read the signs of new attitudes in children, we can foresee a very different group of early adolescents just a little way down the line. Hopefully the middle school is changing itself to be a more hospitable place for the new generations than was found in the old junior high that was fashioned after the high school.

Tomorrow's School: Obsolescent or Regenerative?

Education at all levels has come dangerously close to being obsolescent. A school is obsolescent when it can be shown that the child's beliefs and especially his skills and knowledge are derived primarily from sources outside the school curriculum and school life. Urgently important in a world of accelerated and unpredictable change is the need for schools truly to become theatres of life, staging grounds for involvement with the activities and the emerging new problems of life in the society. In a society of gradual change and of tradition, there is no such need, for the school can be the same place for child that it was for parent or for older brother and sister. We must now operate the enterprise so that the school is certain to be *different* for the child than it was for slightly older brother or sister. Otherwise obsolescence will certainly have occurred; life will long have outdistanced the dogmas to which children are subjected in school classrooms.

The middle-school child, because of biological change and new psychic energy, will always be closely tuned to the emerging new music, beliefs and values of the times. So the middle school must remain flexible and regenerative—in its organization for learning, in its curriculum of study options, and in interpersonal relations between students and teachers.

Signs of the Future

As to the generation of early adolescents to come, the following are some of the things we may expect:

☐ The students will be less concerned about grades. Grades are becoming less and less of a motive for study. Students want to learn something because it seems vital, or necessary, or useful; or because it excites their search for inconsistency; or because it satisfies curiosities. The decline of trust in authority throughout the world has weakened grades as a motivation to study. Besides, knowledge today is very tentative and children are acutely aware of this.

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☐ Students will seek encounters with teachers who are honest. An honest teacher is one who does not profess things to children that he believed as a child but no longer really believes as an adult in the world as it is. Adolescents will seek contact with adults who will not shield from them the real world of man's activity. They will avoid persons who assume a too righteous posture, or anything as permanently valid except perhaps the need for love, respect and care for all living things.

☐ The early adolescent to come will be a natural learner in the inquiry method. From early childhood he will be stimulated in a fast changing world to ask questions, to find things out for himself, to weigh options on the basis of evidence. He will learn early in life that adults cannot supply the answers to complex questions, either in the realm of value or technology. Adults can only join him in the pilgrimage to reconceive things in a new light. Think of the implications here for evaluating some present-day courses in history, civics, or home economics and art.

The trend of more independent inquiry that has gotten into colleges and now high schools will be extended into the middle school. The early adolescent of the future will be less satisfied with structures that permit little leeway for individual exploration.

☐ The age we have fallen into, with disillusionment concerning power, wealth, legitimized corruption, and value of possessions, an age of the loss of heroes, will produce more children who turn to value-seeking, philosophy and art, if the school and its facilities can foster the setting for it. Our new generations of youth will be seeking a kind of knowledge formerly sought only by people in later life, if at all: self-knowledge, personal integration, and the building of community.

The children of the night world need better schools than we now have in order to mature into people who have themselves together and can put truly human communities together.

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Courtesy of Future Homemakers of America

Too Tall or Too Small

Ron Tyrrell, Frank Johns and Fred Hanoch McCarty

—Susie Fitzhugh, Baltimore, MD

MOST OF US can remember only vaguely what it was like leaving behind childhood to become an adolescent. What we remember most is that no one understood us and that we worried a lot about ourselves—about being too tall or too small, being overweight or underweight, having a skin condition, lacking muscular strength, having underdeveloped breasts or genitalia. It seemed that our bodies were in a conspiracy against us. We went from being surefooted to clumsy, from carefree to careless, from helpful to hurtful, from clear-skinned to pimply. We didn't label ourselves; but our elders and peers did, using such terms as "Skinny," "Fatty," "Dumbo" and "Four Eyes." Adults probably saw us as uncooperative, unmanageable and unstable.

Look at three examples:

Jim enters the classroom and trips over the threshold, bumps into three desks on his way to his seat, and then spends the next thirty-five minutes fidgeting. His teacher finds this behavior distracting and calls on him to sit still. Jim responds, "I ain't doing nothing."

Sheila is thirteen but she looks like a woman of twenty. Her breasts and hips are fully developed. Lately in class she refuses to stand, and she appears to be withdrawn. When she does stand, she is stoop-shouldered with her arms folded across her chest.

Larry, the smallest boy in the eighth grade, looks like a sixth-grader. He talks constantly and plays the clown, but the boys and girls are "turned off" and ignore him. As the weeks pass, Larry becomes more sullen with outbursts of anger in class. He begins to be a truant and his school-work suffers.

Why does Jim (or Sheila, or Larry) behave that way, the teacher may ask. Among the possible explanations, the emerging adolescent's stage of physical growth and development should not be overlooked. Frequently, we teachers ignore the physical changes our pupils are experiencing and go on with "business as usual." The purpose of this article is to help increase awareness of the physical side of emerging adolescence and to suggest ways we can help our pupils understand and cope with "growing pains."

Rapid Physical Changes

The key to the physical side of emerging adolescence is an understanding of puberty. It is a time of rapid acceleration in the growth processes of the human body. These changes lead to changed body dimensions, an increase in the sex drive, development of primary and secondary sexual characteristics, and a profound change in the way the person thinks and feels about people and the surrounding world.

Emerging adolescence is a time of physiological metamorphosis. The body shoots up and adds on weight; muscles strengthen and begin to bulge; hips widen; facial hairs pop out; pimples erupt; breasts blossom; smells ripen; sexual maturity is achieved. Almost overnight, the emerging adolescent finds himself or herself in a body that is no longer familiar. Since a person's body is a "symbol of self," a major developmental task is to deal with the problems of accepting emerging size and shape as the physique

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with which one will have to proceed through life.

Many parts of the body attain adult size, while others remain temporarily childlike in appearance. The nose and ears often expand before the skull is ready, thus creating a "Pinocchio" effect, leaving the child to wonder if he (she) will always be so "deformed." Hands and feet also grow more rapidly than arms and legs. Early adolescence is a time of awkwardness and the bumping and dropping of objects. Adults need not create greater problems for the child by expecting him to do things with his body that he is incapable of achieving because he is not ready. "He needs many unstressed environments in which to test his new proportions; and, most of all, he requires patience from others, which, in turn, will foster a self-patience with and for himself (Shoup, 1973)."

Maturation Concerns

The personal timing of physical maturity can and often does create problems for boys and girls. "At age thirteen, fourteen and fifteen, there is an enormous variability among any group of boys, who range all the way from practically complete maturity to absolute preadolescence. The same is true for girls age eleven, twelve, and thirteen (Turner, 1971)."

Early maturing boys are usually the largest and strongest boys in their classes. Adults often confer on them semi-adult status. They are selected to play in school sports, are chosen as school leaders; and they begin their sexual exploits earlier—the tales of which fill the heads of their less-developed school buddies. Often their greatest concern is the extra set of expectations they must live up to.

Early maturing girls typically have more difficult and trying experiences, especially where early participation in sexual activities is concerned. Dwyer and Mayer (1969) point out:

> Embarrassment among early maturing girls . . . centered about conspicuousness, bigness, tallness, complexion, and menstruation. . . . Different from them physically, the older boys may befriend them since boys date girls who are younger. The lack of social and intellectual maturity in early maturing girls and their potential competition in dating may preclude friendship with older girls who are closer to their physiological age.

Late physical maturing often concerns boys more than it does girls—perhaps because typically girls mature two years earlier than boys. Almost all of the girls and most of the boys will have reached their maturity before the late maturing boy. A lack of height, weight and secondary sexual characteristics may lead to his being called "Runt" or "Pee Wee." Girls may tease him about his size, and he will probably feel awkward at social gatherings. His group standing may be so tenuous that he may decide to withdraw rather than face ridicule.

A certain amount of strain in the social area is practically inevitable for late maturing adolescents. If they imitate their physically more advanced classmates and try to date, they may often meet with rebuffs, especially if they tend to awkwardness from lack of experience.

Coping with Maturation Concerns

The child's feelings are real and must be accepted. Teachers who say, "Now don't worry about that—everything is going to be OK" miss the mark entirely since the adolescent's maturation-concerns create intense internal pressure. Emerging adolescents need release for these feelings—a chance to talk

about them without being ridiculed, cut off or patronized. It also helps when they discover how universal their concerns really are.

Let us consider some things teachers can do beyond being patient and understanding. Techniques that use group discussion will help adolescents to explore where each person is in terms of his or her own physical development and to look to the group for support in areas of real concern and anxiety.

One technique is to invite between six and eight boys and girls to join you in a discussion on the subject of physical concerns. When you have the group together, let them know that you are trying to learn more about the physical changes they are undergoing so that you can be a better teacher.

14 Give each pupil several 3 × 5 cards. Ask them to *print* on the cards answers to the question: "Things about my body I worry about most." When they have done this, have each pupil drop his or her card into a small box. Once all of the cards have been collected, pass the box around and ask each person to draw and read a card. The pupil may respond to the question or simply say, "I pass." The box should be passed until all of the questions have been answered or until interest wanes. Such activities open the way for emerging adolescents to begin talking about themselves as people and not merely as pupils.

Physical Activity Needs

Boys and girls (although conventional sex-role stereotyping may stand in their way) have a great need to be physically active. They enjoy wrestling, punching, probing, shoving; in short, they like to be "physical" with each other. Occasionally, this acting-out leads to flaring tempers, but angry reactions are usually temporary and have little lasting effect on friendships. The need to be more physical may be related to the changes that occur in the basic metabolic rate—about 10 percent per year from eleven to fifteen years of age. In some children, the rate of change may be as much as 5-8 percent within a six-month period (Alexander et al., 1969).

Danny, an eighth-grader, was engaged in an independent study project. He was chosen for this option because he had the academic ability as well as the maturity to handle the increased freedom. One day he did a headstand in the main hall near the principal's office. One of the teachers, seeing this, became highly agitated and exclaimed (in a later discussion of the incident): "How could this boy act like that? And, to think, he was 'on his honor' to carry out his own study program!" Danny felt like doing something physical and in the process upset an adult's notion about the way things are supposed to be in school.

Emerging adolescents *will be* physical. Adults working with adolescents can recognize and anticipate this need. Often school materials are unavailable or are in short supply for classes such as art, home economics and metal shop. When boys and girls wait around to share a wood-file because there are not enough to go around, or at other times when they have to do considerable standing and waiting, pushing, shoving and "horsing around" frequently occur. Such behavior is then punished and no one feels good about it, least of all the adolescents. Perhaps people of all ages have deep needs to be "physical" with other people. We forgive such behavior in little children and often delight in contact with them. The problem for young adolescents centers around our expecting them to behave with adult restraint while their childhood habit of touching has not died away.

As teachers become more aware of the relationship of physical development to everyday routines, they will probably want to make practical applications and ask: "What

impact do these changes in physical development have on my classroom? How can I modify my procedures to meet them?" We think the answer to the first question is that many school problems can result from inattention, anxiety, impulsive action, inappropriate clothing and a host of "little" things, all of which can be attributed in some way to these physical changes. "One manifestation . . . of puberty is an increase in energy, which often overrides the thought processes and control mechanisms and discharges itself through action (Committee, 1968.)" The following suggestions may help you modify your classroom to respond to the physical development and activity needs of emerging adolescents.

First, seek to capitalize on the activity needs of your pupils rather than legislating against them. For example, organize to provide variety during each class period to absorb the restlessness that could normally cause "disruptive" behavior. It is to be expected that the child's mind may wander from the assignment. Try using "stand-up," "wake-up" and "start-over" activities. Look for opportunities to organize lessons around active doing rather than passive listening. When some boys and girls show the need for vigorous physical activity or for trying out their strength on others, take them outside. Encourage them to run, jump and walk vigorously. Above all—avoid talking or lecturing excessively.

Second, recognize and accommodate the wide range of physical maturation in the classroom by not having the same expectations for all pupils. The time spent, or degree of precision required, for a specific task may vary considerably due to physiological differences. If nothing else, you can challenge artificial groupings that ignore each person's uniqueness, frustrating many and raising self-doubt in others. Create learning experiences at which children can learn and work at their own rates and in their own styles.

Finally, you can help the emerging adolescent during this time of rapid physical change by being especially understanding and empathetic—a task particularly hard to accomplish because most of us adults seem to repress the feelings and concerns that were generated by our own emerging adolescence. We recommend taking the time to rediscover what you were like as an early adolescent. One way is to look at a photograph of yourself at ages thirteen, fourteen or fifteen and answer the question: "What was I like when this picture was taken?" Unless we are able, from personal experience, to appreciate the problems caused by living in a rapidly changing body, we will be unable to empathize with and understand our pupils. The emerging adolescent needs our understanding, patience and stability during a time when these characteristics are frequently missing from his or her own life.

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"I Am—I Want—I Need"

Preadolescents Look at Themselves and Their Values

Gertrude M. Lewis

What follows is a partial report on a remarkable survey of health interests, concerns and problems of 5,000 Connecticut students in selected schools from kindergarten through grade twelve. We specifically asked Gertrude M. Lewis, who served as Project Director, to extract from the study key passages relevant to the ten- to thirteen-year-old child.

Photo by Joe Di Dio.
Courtesy of National Education Assn.

Why do I act happy, sad, angry? Why can't I control my temper?

Why do I get blamed for everything?

I get so mad and feel like calling the person who angered me bad names.

When I try to do something right, it comes out wrong.

I would like to understand my personality.

QUESTIONS LIKE THESE, asked by ten-year-olds in a recent study, indicate only a few of the deep concerns that haunt pre- and young adolescents as they grow up.

When Ruth V. Byler, health consultant in the Connecticut State Department of Education and leader in her field, decided to have the state health education guide revised, she determined to find a way to go to children and youth for some insights into modern-day interests, giving them opportunity to express their concerns and problems in their own words and without any structured guide or checklist to influence their thinking. Under advisement of some of the nation's outstanding health-related experts, the department secured a director and an analyst and launched a study unique in many ways.

Project Design

Included in the project were more than 5,000 students in grades K-12 in four selected Connecticut school systems, representing inner city, suburban, rural, and high economic communities. By way of

A member of ACEI for many years, Gertrude M. Lewis served on the Publications Committee in 1967-69. She has a long distinguished record of service to the Association and to children. Presently she resides in Amherst, Massachusetts.

class and small group discussions, individual interviews, and free anonymous writing and teacher observations of real-life situations, selected coordinators and teacher-interviewers set the stage for students to express freely their *health interests, concerns and problems.* The complete account of the study reports a wide array of misconceptions, misinformation, half-truths and facts these young people had gleaned from their surroundings. Clues abound for teachers in all grades who wish to be of help to boys and girls in their "now" needs.

Photo by John Lidstone

Focus of Partial Report

For the purpose of this article, evidence related to approximately 2,000 students in grades 5-8 has been extracted from the total report. Hopefully, educators innovating in the "middle schools," where the purpose is to make the curriculum more relevant to the needs of today's ten-to thirteen-year-old young people, will find this partial report of especial use. For example, the sharp difference in questions raised by ten-year-olds and by eleven- to thirteen-year-olds raises some doubt about the advisability of grades 5-8 grouping and indicates the care educators must take to make such a grouping profitable for ten-year-olds.

Summary of Responses

The responses indicate clearly the predominantly preadolescent character of fifth-graders, with a few students (usually girls) embarrassed by early maturation; the

greater mixture of pre- and young adolescents in the sixth grades, with many concerned about indications of puberty; the greater number of young adolescents in the seventh grades, with a few worried and uncomfortable about late maturation; and the more homogeneous development in the eighth grades, but with a few very late maturers.

Interests and concerns reported here represent only some of the myriad problems that consume boys and girls in these highly significant years of development. The analysis of responses produced a clear pattern for organization that seems to fit all grades. Most questions relate to the body and its development and care, to mental health, and to peer and family relations. Some touch on social problems concerning the entire society.

The frequency with which young people of these ages voice interest in body development and function and in peer and family relations evidences that the desire to understand is not just one of mere interest but of real concern. Their drive for understanding causes them to seek answers actively wherever and however found, sometimes accruing to the seekers a formidable fund of fact and fiction. Within this melee the teacher-leader must identify clues enabling him to help each young person in his care to better understanding of self and of life-roles.

INTERESTS RELATED TO THE BODY, ITS DEVELOPMENT AND CARE

General Concerns

Fifth-graders want to know *all about* the body, especially how it grows and develops, what is inside, how the mind works, why some people are smarter than others, how the heart beats, how the cells work, why we have hair, and a host of other things, chiefly about body mechanisms.

A sample poignant concern:

My mother started to tell me about my period, but she had to go out. I wouldn't know what to do if I get it. And what if I have a man teacher? I couldn't tell him.

They ask a few questions about babies:

Why do only girls have babies?
How is a baby formed?
How did our baby grow?
How do we stay alive in our mother's stomach?

Sixth-graders ask many more specific questions:

Why does everyone like me take on the human form and not some other form?
What makes the body go? You have everything you need but what pushes it so it will operate and you start living?
How did I start in my mother's stomach?
How does a baby come out of a woman?
What makes it a boy or girl?
Why can't you have a baby when you're not married?
Does smoking have anything to do with babies being formed wrong?
If your parents are small, will you be small?
Why do girls grow up faster than boys?

Interests of seventh-graders follow along similar lines but are expressed in more numerous and more expertly phrased questions—such as these two which point up the wide range of development in this grade:

Why do some girls in grade seven think they are so grown up?
Why do some kids in grade seven act so immature?

Interests about the body are:

How bodies are and how they grow; everything about the body.
How people grow, inside and out.
How the body changes.
The difference between men and women.

Why some people walk differently.

Why you perspire. What causes blindness.

Do humans have inborn instincts? If so, what are they?

What is sex? How can it affect you? What does it mean? Is it dirty? Are we wrong to be involved in it? Should kids be afraid of it? Adults should answer children's questions truthfully.

Some boys ask:

Why do some boys in this grade understand sex and giggle and laugh?

What is so big about miniskirts and beautiful legs?

Some girls wish to "learn about menstruation, reproduction, pregnancy, birth, birth control, and how you get pregnant." Others ask:

What is a period? Does a boy get a period?

When does menstruation usually start?

How does a female get a baby? What causes reproduction?

Is there any other way to get a baby?

What about premarital sex relations?

You should know what happens if you have sex relations too young. You should know this before junior high school.

What is pregnancy? How do you know you have it?

What are X and Y chromosomes?

How are babies born? Why are some deformed?

Why are babies born without talk or teeth?

Can birth control pills affect a baby?

What is abortion?

Eighth-graders express interests even more comprehensively than do sevenths, and with evident restraint:

The school should teach about the whole body, about all parts; about growth of the body and mind.

It should teach how the parts function:
—how the mind affects the body
—what makes you grow
—how the blood system works
—what the glands and liver do
—how the body repairs itself
—how body weight can be controlled
(This topic received much attention in this grade.)

Regarding sex education, eighth-graders almost unanimously agreed that it should be taught in the schools:

Parents won't help us; schools should.

Teach it before eighth grade so kids will know more than I do.

If we study it early, we will think of it as right and open; ignored, it is dirty.

A girl might do wrong with a boy just out of courtesy and become pregnant, so they need sex education, and protection against sex relations with boys.

Teach it early, but not too young. You learn much in the streets, but not enough.

They ask:

When are we susceptible to conception?

What is a virgin, reproduction, promiscuous, a Caesarian operation, a lesbian, a homosexual, masturbation, etc.?

How can you get rid of a baby?

Are morals important today?

Why can't I get anything done because of thinking of sex and girls?

About Food

Fifth-graders ask:

What foods are best for a person to eat? What foods are bad for you?

Sixth graders:

What vitamins should you have?

What makes you fat?

Some people have no friends and they turn to food and get real fat. Some turn to smoking or taking dope just to impress

others because it's the only way they can get recognition.

Seventh- and eighth-graders point their interest toward weight control.

About Physical Education and Exercise

Fifth- and sixth-graders want specific exercises for good health and for keeping physically fit. Fifth-grade boys want to develop big muscles; sixth-graders want a daily exercise program with a good gym and good, well-trained teachers, large playgrounds, and track and sports.

Seventh-grade girls query:

Do we need as much as boys?

Suggest exercises for cramps.

Are gang showers sanitary, moral and healthy?

When you have a private shower, do you undress entirely?

In the eighth grade, some students question the need for physical education; others want specific suggestions:

What exercises should teenagers do?

What exercises will help me

—build rock-like muscles

—reduce my waistline and upper thighs

—do the split

—make my chest fuller.

Some call for physical education in every grade, voluntary sports in junior and senior high school.

About Personal Health and Grooming

Fifth-graders express little interest in appearance, although they make a bow to general cleanliness, saying, "We should know how to keep clean." Sixth-graders are more concerned, asking for information about care of fingernails, teeth, eyes, feet, and why hair gets oily. They add:

Kids think it's important to stay in style. Some kids dress the way they don't want to just so kids won't make fun of them. The school should have a uniform. Some pupils come to school looking like bums, long hair, dirty nails, shirt tails out, and so on.

Seventh-graders focus in two areas:

How much sleep do I need?

How can I look attractive, cute, and appealing all at once?

Eighth-graders also show intense interest in appearance and attractiveness:

Help us learn more about skin care, odors, cavities, germs, dress, hair styles.

About First Aid and Safety Education

These are considered important by fifth- and sixth-graders, "in case of accidents"; the records are grim with horror incidents. Seventh- and eighth-graders think both topics should be taught by specialists, saying:

We need to know about safety at home, on buses and on bicycles.

Have a fireman teach fire safety, and policeman self-defense.

About Diseases

Young people display fear about diseases of the body, especially in the seventh and eighth grades. Fifth-graders want to know what causes colds, measles, chicken pox and other common diseases and how to cure and prevent them. Sixth-graders show a growing scientific interest, asking how houseflies carry germs, how vaccines are made, and what besides smoking causes cancer.

Seventh-graders express deeper concern, especially about symptoms, causes, treatment and cure of innumerable diseases and ailments. Eighth-graders want to know about maladies to which they are vulner-

able; symptoms of common diseases, including venereal diseases and "mono"; how diseases spread and can be prevented; possible cures for cancer and heart diseases; how babies get defects and how they can be helped.

INTERESTS RELATED TO MENTAL HEALTH

Questions of these boys and girls reveal groping to establish basics for good mental health, especially self-understanding, relationships with others, and a philosophical code of beliefs to sustain and guide one.

"Knowing Myself"

Many fifth-graders want to understand themselves better, especially their uncontrollable moods and fears. Sixth-graders express many of the same concerns and add:

How are habits started? Stopped?

How do I know myself?

Why do I sometimes hate everybody?

Why do I sometimes feel like killing people and babies with ugly faces?

Why do my problems sometimes overrun me?

Why am I afraid of darkness, ghosts, falling from high places?

Everyone's afraid someone is going to make fun of them. That's the trouble. Everyone is afraid of being different. New kids in school are scared to death, especially if they're smart.

It's good to be rebellious because if we weren't, we wouldn't get ahead. Wearing long hair and other ways of rebelling, such as short skirts, is good, because kids might do something worse. It's an outlet for frustration. It's a lot healthier than some other things.

Seventh-graders seem to concentrate on the negative side of mental health:

What is mental illness? What causes it? Can it be cured?

Are there symptoms to tell if you are mentally sick?

How does mental illness differ from being just plain stupid?

Can you drive yourself into having mental illness? Is it the result of problems?

Eighth-graders show more introversion, such as was present in grades four and six. They ask:

How can I keep from yelling, lying, stealing, committing suicide?

How can you detect and prevent mental illness, cracking up, having a nervous breakdown?

How can you teach about teenagers' pressures without getting parents in? Unless they understand kids, it isn't going to do any good to talk about it. Couldn't they be invited to meet with small groups?

I would like to understand myself.

Understanding Others

Fifth-graders say:

I want to know about other people.

I would like to help others and understand them.

Height affects the way you act. John is the biggest boy and he bosses us around because we are smaller. I'm short. If I was tall, I'd act big, maybe. It's hard to say.

Why do boys and girls when they get older act so big and tell dirty things and steal?

Why are Negroes treated differently than white people?

Why does the teacher give my paper to another teacher when she said she wouldn't?

Sixth-graders want to know about psychology and retarded children:

I understand people's feelings, but sometimes I get stumped.

I should like to know what causes retardation and help find a cure for it.

Seventh-graders also want to understand retardation, its causes, treatment and cure. Eighth-graders add:

I hope some day we will have a real liking for each other; that we will understand people of different race and color.

Why do people judge others on superficial things, following fads, etc.?

Will today's generation of kids be able to take over from this generation of grown-ups well?

Fifth- and eighth-graders ask some philosophical questions:

Why did God make me if life is so terrible?

Who am I? What is life? What makes me tick?

What is thinking?

How can you be sure of what and who you are?

What is life all about?

Peer Relations

Friendships hold center stage in grades five and six, questions often revealing the capriciousness of group membership and the growing desire for "real" friends. Fifth-graders ask:

Why do my friends like me sometimes and sometimes not?

Can we prevent being disliked?

Annoyed by the attentions of several advanced fifth-grade girls, a boy confides to his small coterie of friends:

Why do girls call and send notes? If you tell them to cut it out, they call more.

Sixth-graders ask:

Why do I sometimes hate my friends?

What is a real friend? What can I do to make friends?

In seventh grade, the interest swings to dating:

Is there any solution to picking friends well?

How can you make a boy (girl) like you?

Do boys like girls who smoke and are gross?

Should seventh-graders have boy and girl parties?

What is petting?

Is eleven too young to "make out"? So many in the "cool crowd" are doing it. I wonder, "Is there nothing wrong with it?"

With a boy, how far is far enough?

Why do kids become hippies?

Peer relations rise to an absorbing emotion in the eighth grade. Most of the questions focus on attracting the opposite sex, dating and "going steady." They ask:

How can you attract the opposite sex?

Why are some kids so popular and others not? How can you get popular?

How can you get a boy to notice you and like you?

Is there such a thing as love at thirteen?

How do you know you're in love?

Is it wrong to go out with a boy a year or two older?

I am not going to marry. Should I date?

What does "going steady" mean?

Who should set the limit, the boy or the girl? Both should know how far to go and still love each other.

Family Relations

Questions and comments of ten- to-thirteen-year-olds reflect the bickering and momentary jealousies that young people have ex-

pressed since third grade. Learning to cope with day-to-day emotions is not easy.

Nevertheless, relations with parents embrace at least two persistent concerns haunting today's young people, often putting upon them burdens for which they are unfitted: (1) concern that, in their own reaching for greater independence and for friendships outside the home, they will lose the love and support of their parents; and (2) concern for the stability of the home. They see their parents drifting apart and fear that they will lose one or both of them. Even as young as eight, a child agonized to her teacher, "My mother is getting a new husband. I don't think I have love enough for two fathers."

Fifth-graders ask:

Why does my mother get mad at me when I try to do something right? She spends more time with my sister.

Why do people fight between each other within the same family?

Sixth-graders, too, express concern:

Why can't I get along with my brother? Or sister?

Why don't married people be nice to each other?

Why does my father hit my mother for no reason?

Why do people get married if they don't love each other?

If a child has problems at home, who would she be able to talk to about them outside the child's family?

Seventh-graders ask:

How can you convince your mother you're old enough to make your own decisions?

Should I get upset when my parents fight?

Why do some parents let their kids smoke before they are sixteen?

Why do parents shut off their kids when they get drunk or take drugs? Avoid telling their children the facts of life?

If I told my parents I had a boy friend, would they laugh or take it seriously?

And eighth-graders too plaintively speak of strong desire for better understanding and communication with family members, especially parents:

How can I get along with my father?

How do you cope with your parents' fights?

What if there is intensive drinking in your family?

What do you do if your parents divorce and you have to go with one of them?

Parents have such different values from their children. How can you explain what's coming off and keep their trust?

Parents do not trust their children.

Why does sex ring such an awful bell in parents' minds?

Why do some parents disapprove sex education in the schools?

SOCIAL CONCERNS

Some upper-grade boys and girls extend their concern beyond the immediate environment, asking:

Why is there a scapegoat in every group?

Why do some people have love and understanding in their hearts and some have hatred?

Why are there different races of people? Why do people talk different languages; have different skin, traits and abilities?

Students are sufficiently concerned about smoking, drinking and drug abuse that they recommend teaching in grades five and six "the truth" about why people indulge, how body and brain are affected,

how people become addicted, and how one can be helped to stop these habits.

My brother takes dope, so what should I do?

Tell me what drugs look like, so I can protect myself against pushers.

Some are infuriated that older people continue to smoke "when they know what it will do" and with newspapers, magazines and television in advertising them. They are impatient that the law, the "government," does not prohibit manufacture.

Proposed Timetables

In recommending early education in these and sex matters, they have the support of the grades 9-12 groups, who think the high school years are too late to teach about any of these issues. Twelfth-graders say:

Attitudes of maleness and femaleness are formed by kindergarten.

Teach attitudes toward cliques, competition, dating, going steady, etc. Help students choose a good and trusty date.

The health program should begin at home and then be taken over by the school.

Parents should teach their children about sex, but most of them don't. They are embarrassed. Some don't know enough.

Parents don't tell us. There's no place except the school to help us students.

I hope the kids in the years to come will have it better than I did in the way of having education in the facts of life. This survey won't help me, but I sure hope something is done for the children in the years ahead.

In fact, the total report indicates, in charts based on the suggestions of young people and others drawn up by the analysts, that probably grades 6-8 should carry the major responsibility for teaching students about human growth and development, including family life and sex relations, social-emotional development, and social problems in which they may soon become involved. A chapter that includes an account of the flow of interests in all topics from grades K-12 should help teachers and curriculum builders locate points of high interest and reduce repetition in teaching.

Reprise

The evidence shows clearly that boys and girls of ten to thirteen are not placid and unconcerned but are keenly aware of situations threatening their well-being, eager to cope with the present and be ready to meet the future. They appreciate the worth of a good body and mind. They desire profoundly to have the persistent and faithful love and trust of their parents or, lacking that, of some understanding adult. They yearn for opportunities to talk with peers, to raise questions, and to have honest answers from a knowledgeable adult. They want very much to be assured of steady development as competent people. They say, in effect:

Here am I, help me to be all that I may become.

Based on the book-length report by Ruth V. Byler (ed.), Gertrude M. Lewis, and Ruth J. Totman: *Teach Us What We Want To Know* (New York 10016: Mental Health Materials Center, Inc., 419 Park Avenue South, 1969).

In 1943 Fritz Redl published in CHILD STUDY *magazine an epochal article entitled* ***"Preadolescents—What Makes Them Tick?"*** *D. Keith Osborn, 1969-71 chairman of the ACEI Publications Committee, and Lois Barclay Murphy, who served as editorial consultant for the January 1970 issue of* CHILDHOOD EDUCATION, *both strongly urged that as a service to our readers we reprint some of the many significant insights in Dr. Redl's article. With appreciation to the author and the Child Study Association for their generous cooperation, we present the following excerpts:*

Preadolescents— What Makes Them Tick?

Fritz Redl

THE PERIOD OF PREADOLESCENCE is a stretch of no-man's land in child study work. By preadolescence I mean when the nicest children begin to behave in a most awful way. This definition cannot exactly be called scientific, but those who have to live with children of that age will immediately recognize whom I am talking about. This also happens to be the age about which we know least. . . .

The most peculiar phenomena [of the preadolescent period] . . . are found in the area of adult-child relationships. Even youngsters who obviously love their parents and have reason to do so, will develop stretches of surprising irritability, distrust, and suspicion. Easily offended and constantly ready with accusations that adults don't understand them and treat them wrongly, they are yet very reckless and inconsiderate of other people's feelings and are quite surprised if people get hurt because of the way they behave. The concept of gratitude seems to be something stricken from the inventory of their emotions. The worst meal at the neighbors', at which they weren't even welcome, may be described more glowingly in its glory than the best-planned feast that you arranged for their birthday. The silliest antics, the most irrelevant possessions or skills of neighbors will be admired far beyond any well-rooted qualities and superior achievements of father and mother. . . .

Lack of submission to parent-accepted manners becomes another source of conflict. If these youngsters would listen as attentively to what Webster has to say as they do to the language of the worst ragamuffin on the street corner, their grades in English would be tops. Dressing properly, washing, keeping clean are demands which meet with obvious indignation or distrust. In a way, they seem to have lost all sense of shame and decency. Previously clean-minded youngsters will not mind telling the dirtiest jokes if they can get hold of them, and the most charming angels of last year can spend an hour giggling over the acrobatics which a youngster performs with his stomach gas and consider it the greatest joke. . . .

What makes them tick?

PERSONALITY SHAKE-UP

The explanation of [this phase of] human growth must, I think, move along two lines. One is of an *individualistic* nature, the second is a chapter in *group psychology.*

Explanation No. 1: *During preadolescence the well-knit pattern of a child's personality is broken up or loosened, so that adolescent changes can be built into it and so that it can be modified into the personality of an adult.*

Thus, the purpose of this developmental phase is not *improvement* but *disorganization;* not a permanent disorganization, of course, but a disorganization for future growth. This disorganization must occur,

or else the higher organization cannot be achieved. In short, a child does not become an adult by becoming bigger and better. Simple "improvement" of a child's personality into that of an adult would only produce an oversized child, an infantile adult. "Growing" into an adult means leaving behind, or destroying some of what the child has been, and becoming something else in many ways.

The real growth occurs during adolescence: preadolescence is the period of preliminary loosening up of the personality pattern in order that the change may take place. It is comparable to soaking the beans before you cook them. If this explanation is true, then we can understand the following manifestations:

1. During this "breaking-up-of-child-personality" period, old, *long-forgotten or repressed* impulses of earlier childhood will come afloat again, for awhile, before they are discarded for good. This would explain all that we have described about the return to infantile habits, silly antics, irritating behavior, recurring naughty habits, etc.

2. During this period of the breaking up of an established pattern, we also find that *already developed standards and values* lose their power and become ineffectual. Therefore, the surprising lack of self-control, the high degree of disorganization, the great trouble those youngsters have in keeping themselves in shape and continuing to live up to at least some of the expectations they had no difficulty living up to a short time ago. The individual conscience of the child seems to lose its power, and even the force of his intelligence and insight into his own impulses is obviously weakened. This would explain all we have said about their unreliability, the lowering of these standards of behavior, the disappearance of some of the barriers of shame and disgust they had established and their surprising immunity to guilt feelings in many areas of life.

3. During a period of loosening up of personality texture, we would expect that the whole individual will be full of conflict, and that the *natural accompaniments* of conflict will appear again; namely, *anxieties and fears*, on the one hand, and *compulsive mechanisms of symbolic reassurance*, on the other. This is why so many of these youngsters really show fears or compulsive tics which otherwise only neurotic children would show. Yet this behavior is perfectly normal and will be only temporary. This would explain the frequent occurrence of fantastic fears in the dark, of ghosts and burglars, and it would also explain the intensity with which some of these youngsters cling to protective mechanisms, like the possession of a flashlight or gun as a symbol of protection, or the display of nervous tics and peculiar antics which usually include magic tricks to fool destiny and assure protection from danger or guilt.

For a long time I thought that all this about finishes the picture of preadolescent development, until a closer observation of the group life of preadolescents showed me that such a theory leaves much unexplained. It seems to me that there is still another explanation for a host of preadolescent symptoms.

ON THE SCENE COMES THE GANG

Explanation No. II: *During preadolescence it is normal for youngsters to drop their identification with adult society and establish a strong identification with a group of their peers.*

This part of preadolescent development is of a group pyschological nature, and is as important to the child's later functioning as a citizen in society as the first principle is for his personal mental and emotional health. The group phenomenon is surprisingly universal and explains much of the trouble we adults have with children of preadolescent age. To be sure that I am rightly understood, I want to emphasize that what happens during this age goes far beyond the personal relationship between Johnny and his father. Johnny's father now becomes for him more than his father; he becomes, all of a sudden, a representative of the value system of adult society versus the child, at least in certain moments of his life. The same is true the other way around. Johnny becomes more to his father than his child; at certain moments he isn't

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Johnny any more but the typical representative of Youth versus Adult. A great many of the "educational" things adults do to children, as well as many of the rebellious acts of children toward adults, are not meant toward the other fellow at all; they are meant toward the general group of "Adults" or "Youth" which this other person represents. To disentangle personal involvement from this group psychological meaning of behavior is perhaps the most vital and so far least attempted problem of education in adolescence. . . .

HOW TO SURVIVE LIFE WITH JUNIOR

If any of the above is true, then it should have an enormous impact on education. For then most of this preadolescent spook isn't merely a problem of things that shouldn't happen and ought to be squelched, but of things that should happen, but need to be regulated and channelized. Of course, you can't possibly just let Junior be as preadolescent as he would like without going crazy yourself, and you definitely shouldn't think of self-defense only and thus squelch the emotional and social development of your offspring. How to do both—survive and also channelize normal but tough growth periods without damage to later development—is too long a story to complete in a short article. But here are a few general hints:

1. Avoid Counter-Hysterics

It seems to me that ninety per cent of the more serious problems between children and parents or teachers on which I have ever been consulted could have been easily avoided. They were not inherent in the actual problems of growth. They were produced by the hysterical way in which the adults reacted to them. Most growth problems—even the more serious ones—can be outgrown eventually, though this may be a painful process—provided the adults don't use them as a springboard for their own over-emotional reactions. This does not mean that I advocate that you give up and let everything take its course. I do suggest you study the situation and decide where to allow things and where to interfere. The problem is: whichever you decide to do—the *way* you do it should be realistic, free from hysteric over-emotionalism. With this policy in mind you can enjoy all the fun of having problems with your child without producing a problem child.

2. Don't Fight Windmills

Let's not forget that preadolescents are much more expert in handling us than we ever can be in handling them. Their skill in sizing us up and using our emotions and weaknesses for their own ends has reached a peak at this age. It took them eight to ten years to learn, but they have learned by thorough observation. While we were worrying about them, they were not worried about us, and they had ample time and leisure to study our psychology. This means that if they now go out on the venture of proving to themselves how emancipated they are, they will choose exactly the trick which will irritate us most. They will develop preadolescent symptoms in accordance with their understanding of our psychology. Thus, some of them will smoke, curse, talk about sex, or stay out late. Some will stop being interested in their grades, get kicked out of school, or threaten to become the type of person who will never be acceptable in good society. Others again will develop vocational interests which we look down on, will choose the company we dread, talk language which makes us jump, or may even run away at intervals.

But whatever surface behavior they display—don't fall for it. Don't fight the behavior. Interpret the cause of it first, then judge how much and in what way you should interfere. Thus, Johnny's smoking may really mean he is sore that his father never takes him to a football match, or it may mean he thinks you don't appreciate how adult he already is, or it may mean he has become dependent on the class-clown. Mary's insistence upon late hours may mean she doesn't know how to

control herself, or it may mean she is sore because her school pals think you are social snobs who live a life different from theirs, or it may mean she is so scared that her sex ignorance will be discovered that she has to run around with a crowd more sophisticated about staying up late, so as to hide her lack of sophistication in another respect.

In any case, all these things are not so hard to figure out. Instead of getting excited and disapproving of the strange behavior, just open your eyes for a while and keep them open without blinking.

3. Provide a Frame of Life Adequate for Growth

No matter how much you dislike it, every preadolescent youngster needs the chance to have some of his wild behavior come out in some place or other. It will make a lot of difference whether or not he has a frame of life adequate for such growth. For example: Johnny needs the experience of running up against some kind of adventurous situation where he can prove he is a regular guy and not just Mother's boy. Cut him off from all life situations containing elements of unpredictability and he may have to go stealing from the grocery store to prove his point. Give him a free and experimental camp setting to be adventurous in and he will be happily preadolescent without getting himself or anybody else in trouble. All youngsters need some place where preadolescent traits can be exercised and even tolerated. It is your duty to plan for such places in their life as skillfully as you select their school or vocational opportunities.

4. Watch Out for Preadolescent Corns

Most people don't mind their toes being stepped on occasionally. But if there is a corn there, that is a different matter. Well, all preadolescents have certain corns, places where they are hypersensitive. Avoid these as much as possible. One of the most important to avoid is harking back to their early childhood years. The one thing they don't want to be reminded of is of themselves as small children, yourself as the mother or father of the younger child. If you punish—don't repeat ways you used when they were little. If you praise—don't use arguments that would please a three-year-old but make a thirteen-year-old red with shame or fury. Whether you promise or reward, threaten or blackmail, appeal to their sense, morals, or anything else, always avoid doing it in the same way you used to do when they were little. . . .

I have seen many preadolescents reject what their parents wanted, not because they felt that it was unreasonable or unjustified, but on account of the way in which the parents put the issue. There is something like a developmental level of parental control as well as developmental levels of child behavior. The two have to be matched or there will be fireworks.

5. If in Doubt, Make a Diagnostic Check-Up

Not all the behavior forms we described above are always merely "preadolescent." Some of them are more than that. After all, there are such things as juvenile delinquents and psycho-neurotics, and we shouldn't pretend that everything is bound to come out in the wash. . . .

Whenever you are very much in doubt, it is wise to consult expert help for the check-up—just as you would in order to decide whether a heart murmer is due to too fast growth or to an organic disturbance.

Editor's note: The excerpts above form less than half of Fritz Redl's text, which is available in the form of a Child Study Association of America booklet, *Preadolescents: What Makes Them Tick?* ($1.00).* The article is also included in a book by Fritz Redl and David Wineman, *When We Deal with Children: Selected Writings* (Free Press, 1972).

Other CSAA publications* worthy of note are: *Children's Books of the Year* ($2.00); *Family Life and Child Development: Annotated Bibliography* ($2.50); *Sex Education and the New Morality* ($1.95); *What To Tell Your Child About Sex* ($1.95); *When Children Ask About Sex* ($1.25).

* These publications of the CSAA are now available from the Jewish Board of Family and Children's Services, Publications Department, 120 W. 57th St., New York, NY 10019. *Add 50¢ for postage and handling for first book, 15¢ for each additional; all orders must be prepaid.*

Food Fads, Nutrition and Teenage Mothers

Essie E. Lee

"COOL IT—quiet everybody! Lou and Josh are going out for food! Le's see the list. Now is this right? Two chili dogs; two whoppers with fries; one large pizza with anchovies and sausages; one fish and chips; one gyro; two submarines; one taco; four doughnuts; one souvlaki; one falafel—and what else? Oh! How many from the Colonel? Cokes and coffee . . . how many?"

A poker club about to enjoy a late evening snack? Guess again. It's really *breakfast*—the first meal of the day for the Junior Prom Committee of Lynnwood High.

In terms of traditional ideas about what constitutes a good breakfast, many parents would not approve of these youngsters' breakfast choices. Where is the juice with vitamin C, the whole grain cereal, the protein of eggs or the minerals of milk?

An increasing number of nutritionists or health educators contend that the idea of special foods for special times during the day no longer holds—what really matters is the nature of the total diet. A *legitimate* complaint about teenagers' food habits, however, is not that they have a seeming ability to digest almost anything at any hour or that they display tremendous appetites but that those appetites are usually satisfied with empty calories rather than nutritious foods.[1]

Some Frightening Facts

The Lynnwood High youngsters' breakfasts appear more significant when one considers the steadily increasing rate of births to teenage girls. At the October 1975 meeting of the National Conference on School-Age Parenthood held in Denver, Colorado, the following statistics were announced:[2]

a. Nearly one in five American mothers today is a teenager.

b. One in every sixteen girls today becomes a mother by the age of seventeen.

c. More than 250,000 girls of seventeen and younger gave birth in 1974. Eleven percent of them were already parents of one or more children. In addition, the National Center for Health Statistics reports that 46 percent of all black births in 1973 were illegitimate, almost half of these (119,800) to girls between fifteen and nineteen years old. The majority of them were from the lowest income group.

Adequate nutrition during and before pregnancy is important to both mother and baby. Studies show that when mothers are well nourished, babies are in better health at the time of birth and complications of pregnancy are fewer. The risk of prematurity—the greatest cause of death in very young infants—is less when the mother is in good health, including good nutritional health. If the mother is fifteen or younger, the possibility of physical problems in her infant may be drastically increased as a consequence of the low birth-weight often associated with early childbearing.

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Vulnerabilities and Nutrition

Other related concerns are disturbing about teenage pregnancy. Because of the rapid growth and development of the fetus, this period of life is one of greatest vulnerability to nutritional injury. During pregnancy, at the same time that the teenage mother may herself be in a period of rapid growth, the fetus depends on the mother's diet to provide building materials for *its* growth.

The recent release of an extensive study by Professor Robert B. Livingston and his

associates at the University of California at San Diego reinforced arguments for better nutrition for girls.[3] The researchers concluded that as many as one million pregnant women in the United States may suffer from malnutrition serious enough to endanger their babies. But it is not prenatal undernutrition (the absence of essential elements) alone that can cause such damage. The California study also estimated that 1.1 million infants and children in this country are suffering from undernourishment severe enough to hamper their brain development.

Other studies conclude that lack of adequate prenatal care, especially of good nutrition, may affect a child's subsequent learning ability. In the December 18, 1975, issue of *Guidepost*, Dr. Harold Hodgkinson cites findings of recent research in this vein.[4] According to Hodgkinson, who is now director of the National Institute of Education (NIE), lifelong intellectual capabilities may be irreversibly affected by poor quality of prenatal and postnatal care. The University of Minnesota studies showed that "regardless of sex or length of term, children who weigh five pounds or less at birth tend to fall behind heavier children in both mental and motor development."[5]

Importance of the Early Years

Many obstetricians agree that nutritional preparation for pregnancy should begin very early in life. The nutritional status of the pregnant girl depends not only on what she eats during pregnancy, but on her eating habits for a long time previously.[6] For girls who will be mothers before their seventeenth birthdays, adequate nutrition during childhood is vital. The elementary school years are the time for parents and teachers to introduce youngsters to a variety of foods from each of the major food groups, which will provide the essential nutrients, vitamins and minerals for growing minds and bodies.[7]

Growing Fast

A review of physiology shows that boys and girls grow at a faster rate during their teens than at any other time after infancy. A boy's nutritional requirements are at their highest peak when he is growing into adulthood. Parents exclaim in amazement at their children's seemingly insatiable, cavernous appetites. Growth of five inches and weight gains of twelve to fifteen pounds within a year are not unusual. Moreover, body fat decreases while body structures increase in density and muscles develop in size and strength. Understandably, the teen years are often a period of physical and mental stress for both children and their parents.

Why the New Food Fads?

Urbanization and technological development are partly responsible for the popularity of the *new* foods that have become a major part of the diet of many adolescents. Advertising on television and in other forms of media obviously has influenced food habits and customs. But there are other reasons. Among them:

- Working parents have conditioned generations of children to so-called "convenience foods"—"TV dinners" and the like, in canned, frozen or reconstituted form.
- Many young people themselves are at part-time jobs during the family dinner hour.
- Adolescents are prone to fads even in foods; any drink or food associated with social prestige easily introduces a trend (ethnic foods and wine are good examples).
- Young people leave home to establish independent residences much earlier than their parents did. Financial insecurity, career uncertainty, and vacillating lifestyles all can create havoc with adolescents' meeting minimum daily requirements for maintenance of optimal health.
- Teens are style-setters, and most of the chic clothes (even the casual ones) come in small sizes. Because of resultant pressures to keep figures small, crash diets, advertised diet foods and meal substitutes are especially popular with adolescents.
- Limited culinary skill, crowded schedules, and lack of concern about nutrition make youngsters will-

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ing consumers of food from delicatessens and fast-food establishments.

Food fulfills psychological, social and emotional needs. Adolescents, much like their parents, use food for nonnutritive reasons. For example, impromptu and planned celebrations of cookouts, birthdays, graduations, engagements and the like are times to get together to eat, drink and be merry—indiscriminately.

Special Problems of the Poor

The existence of plenty of food in the United States does not assure the nutritional health of all its people. Families and individuals with limited incomes are especially prone to nutritional problems. This population includes poor whites of Appalachia, poor blacks in urban ghettos and the rural south, the elderly, newly arrived Latin Americans, Chicanos, and Indians on reservations. The Columbia Broadcasting System aired their plight in an hour-long documentary entitled *Hunger in America*. Horrendous examples of hunger and malnutrition, especially among young children, were vividly portrayed.

A ten-state nutrition survey, conducted from 1968 to 1970 by the Center of Disease Control, U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, measured nutritional status among a random sample of Americans living in low-income areas.[8] The findings cited hunger and malnutrition among all poverty groups. Even with limited incomes, many individuals managed to maintain good nutritional health, but most did not. The investigating teams recommended a variety of governmental programs to rectify these conditions.

Points To Ponder

Teachers, parents and other concerned citizens desirous of reducing the number of children whose inheritance includes nutritional hunger before and after birth might consider the following concepts and activities:

a. Food habits are sometimes difficult to change because they are learned slowly and are very much a part of one's way of life. (It is a myth though to say that food habits *cannot* be changed: witness the increased use of skim milk in recent years.)

b. The adequacy of family diet is related to family income—but even families considered upper-middle-class often have *poor* diets.

c. In the United States federal assistance helps make more food available to some people with limited incomes (as through *School Food Programs*, including *Special Milk Programs; Summer Food Programs; Supplemental Food Programs for Women, Infants and Children*—commonly known as *WIC;* and the *Food Stamp Program*).

d. One basic positive action is to work toward an effective *School Lunch Program*, with the help of local officials. Benefits of this program, funded at least in part by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, can extend beyond the school building into day care centers, Head Start groups and neighborhood youth centers. Another positive action is to investigate possible funding for pilot breakfast programs, especially in schools located in depressed areas.

e. Young children should be taught how to incorporate snacks and items purchased at *fast food* establishments into their total daily nutritional requirements. Since snacks are a vital part of their food intake, children can be helped to become creative in substituting fresh and dried fruits, nuts, raw vegetables, cheeses, milk-based drinks and sweets made with whole grains for high caloric, sweet pap.

f. Some elementary schools, as well as many secondary schools, are adding study of child care and parenting to updated sex education programs. The focus is on building healthy family relationships based upon sound mental health concepts.

Summary Statement

More adolescent girls become pregnant in the United States than in any other Western or developed country.[9] We have become the nation of the "child mother," if not of the child bride. The growing youngster who becomes pregnant faces many more physiological and psychological risks than her older sister. Not the least of these are due to the fact that she has undertaken to develop another human being before the growth of her own body is completed.

Research findings show differences between malnourished children and well-nourished children on IQ and other tests. The picture is far from complete and research continues. However, there seems to be a strong possibility that malnutrition, if it is severe and prolonged and occurs early enough (probably earlier than six months of age), may affect growth and mental development. With the increase in the number of teenage mothers whose nutrition is less than optimal, the next decade may find our school population with too many children needing all kinds of special services. It would be less costly in lives and money if preventive measures were taken now.

Available evidence on the nutritional status and food habits of adolescent girls—pregnant or nonpregnant—suggests that dietary habits are often bizarre. Intakes of iron, calcium, vitamin A and ascorbic acid tend to be particularly inadequate. It is estimated that some 10 to 12 percent of adolescents entering pregnancy are obese, and a somewhat similar proportion are underweight.[10]

The woman who is likely to produce a health baby is one who has, through best health and nutritional practices, reached sexual maturity after completing her own growth and achieving the potentials for physical development provided by heredity.

Responsibility for nutritional health rests with the individual, the family and the community.

References

[1] An excellent resource for teachers, full of practical information on this question and many others raised in this article, is *Food: Where Nutrition, Politics and Cultures Meet: An Activities Guide for Teachers*, by Deborah Katz & Mary T. Goodwin, M.P.H. (distributed by the Center for Science in the Public Interest, 1755 S St., N.W., Washington, DC 20009; 1976; 212 pp.; $4.50). Write to Nutrition Action Project, CSPI, for a list of other useful related publications.

[2] Saul Kapel, Parents and Children Column, "Teenage Parenthood Means Lifetime Trouble," *New York Daily News*, Nov. 3, 1975.

[3] Cited in "Brain Damage in U.S. Laid to Food Lack," by Harold L. Schmeck, *New York Times*, Nov. 2, 1975. Original reference: *Growth and Development of the Brain: Nutritional, Genetic, and Environmental Factors*, Vol. I, Robert B. Livingston et al. (New York: Raven Press, 1975; part of International Brain Research Organization monograph series); see esp. pp. 377-92. For a concise discussion of "the extent to which children are temporarily or permanently handicapped in learning because of malnutrition," see *Malnutrition, Learning, and Behavior*, by Merrill S. Read & David Felson (Washington, DC: National Institute of Child Health and Human Development Center for Research for Mothers and Children; DHEW Publication No. (NIH) 76-1036; available on request from NICHD Office of Research Reporting, NIH, Bethesda, MD 20014).

[4] Harold Hodgkinson, cited in "Prenatal Care Affects Learning," *Guidepost*, Dec. 18, 1975, p. 5 (Washington, DC 20009: American Personnel and Guidance Association, 1607 New Hampshire Ave., NW).

[5] University of Minnesota Studies, funded by NIE, 1975. Rosalyn E. Rubin, Director.

[6] Margaret G. Phillips, *Food for the Teenager During Pregnancy*, U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Public Health Service, Health Services Administration (Washington, DC 20402: Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office; DHEW Publication No. (HSA) 76-5611; 1976; 80¢).

[7] Mary T. Goodwin & Gerry Pollen, *Creative Food Experiences for Children* (Washington, DC: Center for Science in the Public Interest, 1974; 191 pp.; $4; see footnote #1 for address and other information).

Another good resource is ACEI's own publication, *Cooking and Eating with Children: A Way To Learn* (Washington, DC: The Association, 1974; 48 pp.; $2.50).

[8] *Ten-State Nutrition Survey 1968-1970. Highlights* (Atlanta, GA: Center for Disease Control, U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare; DHEW Pub. No. (HMS) 72-8134; 1972).

[9] Robert E. Shank, M.D., "Maternal Nutrition," in *Nutrition Today Teaching Aid No. 8*, p. 7; based on "A Chink in Our Armor," *Nutrition Today*, Vol. 5, No. 2, Summer 1970 (Annapolis, MD 21404: 101 Ridgely Ave., P.O. Box 465). (Dr. Shank is Chairman of the Committee on Maternal Nutrition of the Food and Nutrition Board of the National Research Council.)

[10] *Ibid*, p. 13.

See also:
CE 51, 3 (Jan. 1975): DeeDee Jameson, "What Do They Know from Bacon and Eggs?"; Nila Banton Smith, "Child Nutrition in a Changing World."
Nutrition and Intellectual Growth in Children. Washington, DC: ACEI, 1969.

Courtesy of Future Homemakers of America

The Poor Scholar's Soliloquy

No, I'm not very good in school. This is my second year in the seventh grade and I'm bigger and taller than the other kids. They like me all right, though, even if I don't say much in the schoolroom, because outside I can tell them how to do a lot of things. They tag me around and that sort of makes up for what goes on in school.

I don't know why the teachers don't like me. They never have very much. Seems like they don't think you know anything unless they can name the book it comes out of. I've got a lot of books in my own room at home—books like *Popular Science Mechanical Encyclopedia*, and the Sears' and Ward's catalogues, but I don't very often just sit down and read them through like they make us do in school. I use my books when I want to find out something, like whenever Mom buys anything secondhand I look it up in Sears' or Ward's first and tell her if she's getting stung or not. I can use the index in a hurry to find the things I want.

In school, though, we've got to learn whatever is in the book and I just can't memorize the stuff. Last year I stayed after school every night for two weeks trying to learn the names of the Presidents. Of course I knew some of them like Washington and Jefferson and Lincoln, but there must have been thirty altogether and I never did get them straight.

I'm not too sorry though because the kids who learned the Presidents had to turn right around and learn all the Vice-Presidents. I am taking the seventh grade over but our teacher this year isn't so interested in the names of the Presidents. She has us trying to learn the names of all the great American inventors.

—Susie Fitzhugh, Baltimore, MD

Kids Seemed Interested

I guess I just can't remember names in history. Anyway, this year I've been trying to learn about trucks because my uncle owns three and he says I can drive one when I'm sixteen. I already know the horsepower and number of forward and backward speeds of twenty-six American trucks, some of them Diesels, and I can spot each make a long way off. It's funny how that Diesel works. I started to tell my teacher about it last Wednesday in science class when the pump we were using to make a vacuum in a bell jar got hot, but she said she didn't see what a Diesel engine had to do with our experiment on air pressure so I just kept still. The kids seemed interested though. I took four of

This pithy piece might be subtitled "Cue to Curriculum." At the time of writing Stephen "Max" Corey was Superintendent of the University of Chicago's Laboratory Schools and Professor of Education at the University. Subsequently he taught for years at Teachers College, Columbia University, New York City, where he became Dean of Faculty. He now resides in Palm Springs, California.

Stephen M. Corey

them around to my uncle's garage after school and we saw the mechanic Gus tearing a big truck Diesel down. Boy, does he know his stuff!

I'm not very good in geography either. They call it economic geography this year. We've been studying the imports and exports of Chile all week but I couldn't tell you what they are. Maybe the reason is I had to miss school yesterday because my uncle took me and his big trailer truck down state about two hundred miles and we brought almost ten tons of stock to the Chicago market.

He had told me where we were going and I had to figure out the highways to take and also the mileage. He didn't do anything but drive and turn where I told him to. Was that fun! I sat with a map in my lap and told him to turn south or southeast or some other direction. We made seven stops and drove over five hundred miles round trip. I'm figuring now what his oil cost and also the wear and tear on the truck—he calls it depreciation—so we'll know how much we made.

I even write out all the bills and send letters to the farmers about what their pigs and beef cattle brought at the stockyards. I only made three mistakes in seventeen letters last time, my aunt said—all commas. She's been through high school and reads them over. I wish I could write school themes that way. The last one I had to write was on "What a Daffodil Thinks of Spring," and I just couldn't get going.

I don't do very well in school in arithmetic either. Seems I just can't keep my mind on the problems. We had one the other day like this: "If a 57-foot telephone pole falls across a cement highway so that 17 3/6 feet extend from one side and 14 9/17 feet from the other, how wide is the highway?"

That seemed to me like an awfully silly way to get the width of a highway. I didn't even try to answer it because it didn't say whether the pole had fallen straight across or not.

Not Getting Any Younger

Even in shop I don't get very good grades. All of us kids made a broom holder and a bookend this term and mine were sloppy. I just couldn't get interested. Mom doesn't use a broom anymore with her new vacuum cleaner and all our books are in a bookcase with glass doors in the parlor. Anyway, I wanted to make an end gate for my uncle's trailer but the shop teacher said that meant using metal and wood both and I'd have to learn how to work with wood first. I didn't see why but I kept still and made a tie rack at school and the tailgate after school at my uncle's garage. He said I saved him $10.

Civics is hard for me, too. I've been staying after school trying to learn the "Articles of Confederation" for almost a week because the teacher said we couldn't be good citizens unless we did. I really tried, because I want to be a good citizen. I did hate to stay after school, though, because a bunch of us boys from the south end of town have been cleaning up the old lot across from Taylor's Machine Shop to make a playground out of it for the little kids from the Methodist home. I made the jungle gym from old pipe and the guys made me Grand Mogul to keep the playground going. We raised enough money collecting scrap this month to build a wire fence clear around the lot.

Dad says I can quit school when I'm fifteen and I'm sort of anxious to because there are a lot of things I want to learn how to do and, as my uncle says, I'm not getting any younger.

Contributors

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Top row (l.-r.)—John R. Burton, Lois Barclay Murphy, Donald McNassor, Ron Tyrrell
Middle (l.-r.)—Frank Johns, Fred Hanoch McCarty, Gertrude M. Lewis, Fritz Redl
Bottom (l.-r.)—Essie E. Lee, Stephen M. Corey

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